

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A process for forming a joint ~~formed~~ between ~~two overlapping portions of polymeric material~~ a polymeric balloon and a polymeric catheter shaft comprising the following steps in order:

assembling the balloon on the shaft such that a balloon neck area overlaps the shaft;

welding the ~~overlapping portions~~ neck area to the shaft to create a joint ~~region;~~ and

applying a tensile force to the joint ~~region~~, the force being ~~[[of]]~~ sufficient ~~strength~~ to elongate the joint ~~region~~, thus thinning the joint ~~region~~.

Claim 2 (canceled):

Claim 3 (currently amended): A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the force applied is in the range ~~[[is]]~~ of 0.75 - 1.5 pounds force (lbf).

Claim 4 (canceled):

Claim 5 (currently amended): A process as claimed in claim ~~[[4]]~~ 1 wherein applying a tensile force further comprises gripping the balloon neck ~~is clamped area with clamps~~ on either side of the joint ~~region~~, and applying the tensile force ~~is applied~~ between the ~~clamped regions~~ clamps.

Claim 6 (original): A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the tensile force is applied to a cold joint.

Claim 7 (original): A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the tensile force is applied to a heated joint.

Claim 8 (original): A process as claimed in claim 7 wherein the joint is heated by the application of hot air.

Claim 9 (new): A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein welding the neck area to the shaft further comprises heating the neck area.

Claim 10 (new): A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein assembling the balloon on the shaft further comprises mounting the balloon and the shaft on a mandrel.

Claim 11 (new): A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein applying a tensile force to the joint further comprises thinning the joint to a reduced cross sectional area having smooth tapers at the limits of the joint.

Claim 12 (new): A process as claimed in claim 11 further comprising, after applying a tensile force to the joint, cutting the joint to leave a gradually tapered catheter tip.